



# AA Area 73 District 11

## Newsletter

January 2024 Volume 108

West Virginia – Wild, Wonderful, and Sober

### **Grapevine Corner**

“If you know someone who tries to drown their sorrows, you might tell them that sorrows know how to swim.”

- Ann Landers

“I chose sober because I wanted a better life. I stay sober because I got one.” - Anonymous

“I wouldn’t have been able to have access to myself or other people, or even been able to take in other people, if I hadn’t changed my life.” - Bradley Cooper

“The capacity for emotional sobriety belongs to everybody in the human family and leads to a fully human response to the adventure and goodness of the gift of human life.” - Thomas Keating

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Step**

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Tradition**

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Concept**

Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Promise**

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Reward**

Hope instead of desperation.

Happy New Year everyone! I hope you all have a healthy, sober, relatively problem-free year. If there are problems may they be easily dispatched. The January issue of Grapevine Magazine is titled “Emotional Sobriety.” I am still not sure what that means, but there are several members whose stories were put under that heading. The titles of these stories are: “Little surrenders”; “Doing just fine”; “Tending my garden”; “It all adds up”; “Passing it on”; and “Life moves along.” I hope you enjoy them. Another good story this month is titled, “Unity=love” about how we use the tools of AA to keep our groups together and that we are all equal in AA.

To receive the Grapevine quote of the day, log on to [www.aagrapevine.org](http://www.aagrapevine.org) and provide your email address at the end of the quote. Grapevine has started providing stories of the week in email which is another good reason to sign up. While on the website you can subscribe to The Grapevine magazine, order books, and play with the sobriety calculator among other things.

Please don't forget to read At Wit's End which is near the end of the magazine.

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\*Also, every Monday is Grapevine's fun half-hour Grapevine Podcast. It features jokes, interviews, and member sharing at [www.aagrapevine.org/podcast](http://www.aagrapevine.org/podcast).

And finally:

- ✓ A bicycle can't stand alone because it is two-tired.
- ✓ What's the definition of a will? (It's a dead giveaway).
- ✓ Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
- ✓ She had a boyfriend with a wooden leg, but broke it off.
- ✓ A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

I wish the very best for you all in 2024!

Pat McElroy

### **The 1<sup>st</sup> Tradition (LONG FORM)**

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

## **AREA INFO**

1. Here's some info for those wishing to make financial contributions:

- District 11  
Make check payable to  
District 11  
PO Box 1831, Martinsburg WV 25402
- Area Contribution:  
Make check payable to  
Area 73  
PO Box 461, Morgantown WV 26507-0461
- General Service Office contribution:  
Make check payable to  
GSO  
Po Box 459, Grand Central Station. New York, NY 10163



## BIG ANNOUNCEMENT!!!!

Beginning this month, the newsletter will feature a new section called “AA Around the World”. It will feature AA’s stories, letters, poems, etc, gathered by your intrepid reporter and world traveler. Watch this space.

## DISTRICT MEETING NEWS

SEVERAL DISTRICT MEMBERS HAVE MENTIONED THAT THE ANNIVERSARY LIST BEING PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSLETTER IS NO LONGER ACCURATE AS MANY PEOPLE HAVE MOVED, PASSED AWAY, ETC.

THEREFORE IT WAS SUGGESTED AND AGREED THAT IT WOULD NOT LONGER BE PUBLISHED HERE IN THE NEWSLETTER, BUT WOULD INSTEAD BE PUBLISHED ON THE WEBSITE. EACH DISTRICT AA MEMBER WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SENDING IN THEIR OWN ANNIVERSARY & CELEBRATION INFORMATION

We are asking all groups and individuals to send their Name, sobriety celebration date, years of sobriety and meeting they are celebrating at.

Send to [Rusty.danstuxedo@hotmail.com](mailto:Rusty.danstuxedo@hotmail.com). Put in the subject matter **“AA Anniversary”**.

IN OTHER NEWS..... Since the monthly district meeting minutes are now being published on the website: <https://aaww11.org/> they will no longer be published here.

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# DISTRICT INFORMATION

1. FULL District Meeting minutes are now being posted monthly, and you can view them at <https://aawv11.org/>
2. Please note that if you'd like to view the monthly newsletter online, you can do so at <https://aawv11.org/>
3. And, if you'd like to have the newsletter delivered to your inbox every month, please send an email request to [AAdistrict11@gmail.com](mailto:AAdistrict11@gmail.com)
4. **If YOU have an announcement you want posted here** (sober room for rent, items for sale, looking to carpool to meetings, etc.) please send your announcement to us at [AAdistrict11@gmail.com](mailto:AAdistrict11@gmail.com). Deadline for submission in next month's newsletter is the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month

## ***Coming Events & Announcements***

Marlowe Group: Anniversary Eat & Group Meeting- January 16th @ 5:30pm with speaker at 7pm.

*For more detailed information, please speak with your group's GSR.*

## **District 11 Meetings On-line**

According to the latest Where and When published June 2021, all groups are meeting in person or have a hybrid meeting format except for the following which are on-line.

**Daily at 7:30am-** Eye Opener Group Hybrid  
<https://www.gotomeet.me/EyeOpenerGroup>  
Dial in at [\(646\) 749-3122](tel:(646)749-3122)  
Access Code: 604-461-373

**Daily at 5:30pm -** Early After Work Friends of Bill W. Group  
Zoom Meeting ID 671-314-2769  
Password: 118

**Daily at 7:00pm -** Doomsdayers Group  
Join Zoom Meeting ID 942-899-066  
Password 049396

**Sundays at 2:00pm -** Women On A Journey Group  
Join Zoom Meeting ID 274-008-239  
Password: woaj

**Wednesday at 7:00pm –** Wednesday Night Men's Group Hybrid  
<https://www.gotomeet.me/EyeOpenerGroup>  
Dial in: [+1 \(646\) 749-3122](tel:+1(646)749-3122) Access Code 604-461-373

# JANUARY 2024



## **STEP ONE**

This is the step in which we lay the foundation for our recovery. After admitting our powerlessness we can begin our journey to successful recovery. Without this step our efforts will be in vain. Many of us alcoholics struggle with this step for a number of reasons; maybe we haven't lost everything as others may have, maybe we think that we just try harder to manage our lives or control our drinking, maybe it is that we don't want a Higher Power to run the show, the list can go on and on. However, until we admit that we are powerless over alcohol and until we admit that our lives are unmanageable not much will be accomplished.

Step one is often misinterpreted. The step says "We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable." The dash in this statement acts as a continuation of thought. It does not say "and our lives had become unmanageable." The dash indicates two related but separate thoughts that we are admitting to; we admitted we were powerless over alcohol....we admitted our lives had become unmanageable. The unmanageability of our lives, and our powerlessness over our alcoholism go hand in hand. We need to recognize the truth about both. Once we have understood and accepted these co-occurring facts, we can begin to recover. We can surrender to the fact that our old ways of living were unsuccessful, and a new way of living is a must for survival.

Taking step one is not just a matter of saying the words, rather it is an adoption of a new attitude and outlook upon life and more importantly an adoption of new ACTIONS. We become willing to take the suggestions of others that have traveled the same path before us and have found recovery. This is the point where hope begins to return, and we start to realize that there is a better way of living free of the internal prison we have been trapped. Once we have thoroughly taken this step with no reservations, our foundation for recovery is poured. It is from here that we plant our feet on solid ground once again and begin our life long journey of recovery.

## **TRADITION ONE:**

"Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward."

Our whole A.A. program is securely founded on the spiritual principle of humility. Humility is based on our perspective, and how we relate ourselves rightly to God and to each other. It is the ability see ourselves as we really are—and to understand that we are “a small part of a great whole.” When we personally practice humility it then is reflected in our personal lives, our home groups and in AA as a whole. Humility keeps us unified. That is why Tradition One can confidently state, “Our common welfare comes first” because it is not all about us.

This doesn’t mean that the individual doesn’t matter in AA. In fact there is no society on earth that I have found more welcoming, more loving, more helpful, and more careful to grant the individual the greatest possible liberty of belief and action. In Alcoholics Anonymous we get to be our truest selves, we are given encouragement to grow and granted the freedom to progress without the demand for perfection. A.A. groups do not impose penalties on anyone for non-conformity. We suggest, but we don’t discipline. Compliance or non-compliance with any principle of A.A. is a matter for the conscience of the individual.

The question then arises...with so much freedom given to individuals, with no rules, no human authority or government, how can we ensure that the common welfare will come first in AA? How in the world do we keep unity? Well the plain truth is that in A.A. we cannot really do as we please...in fact our common welfare is protected by some very powerful safeguards. The moment any individual’s action seriously threatens the common welfare of AA, the spiritual principles, the Steps, the Traditions and the group opinion mobilizes to remind us, to guide us and to direct us. Granted, this is often not a pretty process, in fact it can get pretty messy and scary, but experience has proven it works.

Another safeguard is our own alcoholism. If a person persists in taking action in opposition to the spiritual principles, the Steps and Traditions unfortunately the end result is that the person will end up drinking and alcohol will do the beating. A sponsor’s guidance is extremely valuable in showing us when we are off the beam personally and the home group’s opinion works similar when we are off the beam regarding humility and unity in AA as a whole. The Steps and Traditions bring concrete common sense and conviction which help us to cease our rebellion and to begin to cooperate within the group and AA as a whole. We mature spiritually and begin to discipline our actions and conduct.

As we grow, our focus and commitment to unity also grow, because we really wish to live in humility and unity and because we love AA. We finally see that without substantial unity there can be no A.A. and without A.A. there can be little lasting recovery for anyone. We gladly set aside our own personal plans, pride, and ambitions whenever these might harm A.A. and we finally realize we are but “a small part of a great whole.”

## **CONCEPT ONE:**

“Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.”

The organization structure of Alcoholics Anonymous has been designed as an upside-down triangle, because the “final responsibility and ultimate authority resides with the individual groups...your home group.

Back in 1938, the creation of a trusteeship occurred, because in the midst of the “exuberant success” of early A.A., Dr. Bob became fatally ill and Bill wondered who would advise after Dr. Bob and he were gone. The answer, Bill felt, was to be found in the collective conscience of the A.A. groups. Bill and Dr. Bob, entrusted by the early groups to get the program going and to spread the message, found nonalcoholic friends to help them form a trusteeship and delegated to it the responsibility for finances, the Big Book, literature, and several other tasks. First called the Alcoholic Foundation, and renamed in 1954 the General Service Board, its job is to help us do the things that individual groups cannot do for themselves: e.g., literature,

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printing, translating the Big Book into different languages, helping AA grow in other countries, etc. To accomplish all of this, an office was opened in New York and it operates under the board's direction.

The primary purpose of AA groups is to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic, so in order to focus on that, each group is supposed to elect a General Service Representative. For AA to remain healthy and strong, it is vital that the GSR be well ground in the program of AA as outlined by the Big Book, and be the very best person available within the group to serve in this role. It is the responsibilities of G.S.R.s to attend their home group's business meetings, District meetings, and Area Assemblies, in order to give your Home Group a voice and a vote. From your Area, one delegate is elected from among the GSR's, who will then represent your group/district/area. Every April, each of those elected delegates from the U.S. and Canada (93 in all) meet for six days with the trustees of the General Service Board, the staff from the General Service Office, as well as the A.A. Grapevine and certain other service workers. So it is vital for the future well-being of AA that each home group and member understand not only the structure, but the immense importance of the GSR role. The group, through their GSR is "the actual voice and effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs."

Responsibility is one spiritual principle in Concept One, because the entire fellowship will suffer if we as individuals and groups shirk our responsibility to participate in the upside down triangle. And as Bill stated, "With great freedom comes great responsibility." Certainly accepting responsibility for our recovery, at every level, is vital for sobriety, spiritual growth and growth. Likewise, accepting final responsibility for our fellowship as a whole seems the ultimate expression of that principle in action.

## ***CALL FOR NEWSETTER CONTRIBUTIONS.....***

Anyone wishing to submit an announcement, or story for the newsletter is encouraged to do so by emailing Pam Washington at [AAdistrict11@gmail.com](mailto:AAdistrict11@gmail.com)